

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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**Media Contact:**

Lisa M. de Hernández  
Public Information Officer  
410.313.6353 M: 410.428.7294  
[ldehernandez@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:ldehernandez@howardcountymd.gov)

## **National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day – Is Your Child the One in Five?**

National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day on May 10, 2018, seeks to raise awareness about the importance of children's mental health and show that positive mental health is essential to a child's healthy development. Nationally, one in five children between the ages of 13 and 18 are diagnosed with a mental health illness (NIMH, 2016).

In Howard County, eleven percent of parents said that their child was diagnosed with either depression or anxiety (2016 Howard County Health Assessment). Roughly eighteen percent of Howard County middle school students reported feeling sad or hopeless over the course of a year, with approximately fifteen percent seriously considering a suicide attempt. (2014 Maryland Youth Risk Behavior Survey) For those in high school, nearly twenty-five percent reported feeling sad or hopeless throughout one year. Thirteen percent of females and roughly nine percent of males made plans to attempt suicide. (2014 Maryland Youth Risk Behavior Survey)

The American Academy of Pediatrics says that symptoms of children and adolescents with depression often include sadness, irritability, change in appetite or sleeping patterns, inability to concentrate, feelings of hopelessness or helplessness, conflicts with family and friends and use of alcohol and drugs. If you believe that your child or adolescent is suffering from depression, speak to their healthcare provider. They will determine the right treatment for you and your child.

For additional information, the Health Department will have a table filled with children's mental health resources, displays and giveaways in the lobby of the Columbia offices at 8930 Stanford Blvd, Columbia, MD on Thursday, May 10, 2018, from 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Staff will be on hand to answer questions and provide information.

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